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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/579,050	05/26/2000	Lawrence S. Walters Jr.	359.6559USU	7729

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12/16/2003

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EXAMINER

ELOSHWAY, NIKI MARINA

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3727

DATE MAILED: 12/16/2003

21

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/579,050

Applicant(s)

WALTERS JR., LAWRENCE S.

Examiner

Niki M. Eloshway

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 October 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 3-14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 4-14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 3 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1 and 4-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Whitehouse (U.S. 3,927,796). Whitehouse teaches a closure apparatus, shown in figures 1-6, having a cap portion at 26 and a handle at 34. The peripherally depending side wall is shown at lead line 26 in figure 1 and the radially inwardly extending peripheral lip is element 32. The lip 32 is considered a peripheral lip because it is an element of the periphery and extends from the periphery of the closure.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claim 3 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments filed October 3, 2003 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues that Whitehouse does not have a radially inwardly extending peripheral lip. The examiner disagrees with this position. Whitehouse teaches a lip 32. This lip extends radially inwardly from the skirt. This lip can also be considered "peripheral" because it belongs to and extends along a portion of the periphery. The term "peripheral" is not limited to structure that extends

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continuously along the entire periphery. For these reasons, the lip 32 of Whitehouse is considered radially inwardly extending and peripheral as set forth in claims 1, 13 and 14.

5: Applicant argues that Whitehouse fails to teach a closure apparatus that sealably secures a material housed in a container. Claim 1 is drawn to a closure and recites "wherein a material housed by said container is secured in said container by said cap portion" (lines 6-7). The container and material housed therein are not part of the claimed invention, since the claim is drawn to the closure only. It is submitted that the closure of Whitehouse can perform the intended function when placed on an appropriately sized container without a valve which houses material having a particle size larger than any space between the closure side wall and bead of the container. In figure 4 of Whitehouse, it can be seen that lip 20 abuts against the inner surface of the skirt. Since the closure of Whitehouse is formed of a rigid material without apertures, it is capable of being sealably secured to an appropriately sized and shaped container.

6. In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., providing a fluid-tight seal) are not recited in the rejected claims. Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

7. Regarding applicant's argument that Whitehouse does not specifically state that the closure is capable of being sealably secured to the container, the express, implicit, and inherent disclosures of a prior art reference may be relied upon in the rejection of claims under 35 U.S.C. 102 or 103. "The inherent teaching of a prior art reference, a question of fact, arises both in the context of anticipation and obviousness." *In re Napier*, 55 F.3d 610, 613, 34 USPQ2d 1782, 1784 (Fed. Cir. 1995) (affirmed a 35 U.S.C. 103 rejection based in part on inherent disclosure in one of the references). See also *In re Grasselli*, 713 F.2d 731, 739, 218 USPQ 769, 775 (Fed. Cir. 1983).

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8. Regarding the method of operation, it is the examiner's position that Whitehouse anticipates the method limitations of claim 13. Specifically, claim 13 recites that the lower handle portion is depressed toward the container until the peripheral lip disengages the bead undercut. Whitehouse meets this limitation because the lower handle portion at 34 is depressed from the position shown in figure 4 to the position shown in figures 5 and 6. The lower handle is depressed until the peripheral lip disengages the bead undercut, as shown in figure 6. The fulcrum portion of the Whitehouse invention is shown at lead line 38.

Conclusion

9. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

10. In order to reduce pendency and avoid potential delays, Group 3720 is encouraging FAXing of responses to Office Actions directly into the Group at (703)305-3579. This practice may be used for filing papers not requiring a fee. It may also be used for filing papers which require a fee by applicants who authorize charges to a USPTO deposit account. Please identify the examiner and art unit at the top

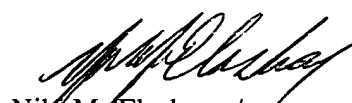
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of your cover sheet. Papers submitted via FAX into group 3720 will be promptly forwarded to the examiner.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Niki M. Eloshway whose telephone number is (703) 308-1606. The examiner is in the office on Tuesdays and Fridays. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the 3700 Customer Service Office at (703) 306-5648.



Stephen K. Cronin
Primary Examiner



Niki M. Eloshway/nme
Patent Examiner
December 9, 2003